

Establishing the Church was depending, I was Contented to pass over that Titular Character of y^e Commissary, that I might with greater advantage sollicite the affair for you and this I say I was contented to do for Maryland, tho **it has kept Me and My Family 2 and a half years in Town, and exposed me to Such a Vast Expense,** as a contest with the Quakers, who have a Publick Purse rendered unavoidable.

But now having obtain^d the settleme^{nt} of the Parochial Ministers, I do absolutely disown all other Relation to Maryland, otherways than as a friend to the Province, who will continue such to his Dying Day and that to the Utmost of his Power will endeavor all the ways he can to serve it in its greatest interests, that is, in all things that may tend to the good of the peoples Souls, and should you pafs such an Act, & send it here for the R[oyal]. Assent, tho at its Coming here it **will find Me near a 100 miles from Town,** yet I promise that I will come 1 yr [end of page 2] & Sollicite it for you and pofsibly make it as hard & odious to have you refused in this, whi^{ch} will provide for the Good Government of y^e church, as was done in that other whi^{ch} provided for Private Ministries in it.

Now should you think fit to reenact the Law for the vesting the office of Commisary upon the Ecclesiastical Superintendent, it will be necessary that you should give it all the Advantages pofsible in the Preamble to the Act and such Considerations as I think Proper to be asserted I have already suggested.

It will be also absolutely Necefsary, if you wo[u]ld have the Superintendent in a Capacity to keep Evil Men from Coming in at first into the pofsession of the Cures, that tho **the Presentation of your churches should remain in the Governor,** yet the **Power of Institution to and Induction into them should be vested in the Superintendent, or He that is appointed to Preside over the Clergy,** call Him what you will, for by that Means the Governor and Superintendent will be Checks one upon another in that Important Concern of settling a Good Clergy amongst you, which alone will be a great Means to secure you from the Entrance of Bad Men into the Churches.

And no Governor will have any reason to Complain of any infringe^{nt} of his Powers by his Limitation, that hereby the Power of Inductions shal be taken from Him. He will have the Presentation to the Living left to him and why should he desire, or expect a greater **prerogative in his governme^{nt} than the Queen (from whom He derives) does her self enjoy.** The Crown does here with us present to Many Churches but does not Institute or

Induct to any. The Former is the Part of the Bishop, the latter of the Arch Deacon with us, and by Means of whi^{ch} two or three checks as I said before, you wo[u]ld be better provided against the coming in of Scandalous Men into the churches, whi^{ch} is a main step toward the Maintaining a good discipline in the Church. It being very hard to Expell or Deprive a Wicked CLerk out of a Parish when once Legally vested therein as his Freehold. Nor in truth as to the Right of Presentation it Self can I see any Manner of Reason why the Governor of any Province should expect to present to all Livings, within his Governme^{nt}, when the Crown it self does not do the fame here.

Those 30 Parishes whi^{ch} you have already founded may remain in the Presentation of the Governor. But should a clause be inserted in the Bill We are now speaking of, to invest the right of a Presentation to a Church in any Person who shall for the benefit and Comfort of Himself and Neighbors build a Church, and endow it with a Glebe, and stock, should such Power I say of Presenting to Churches be vested in any that should found a Church; I am persuaded that some 1000s of the Gopd People of Maryland, wo[u]ld not long be under y^e necefsity of never, or Seldom coming to church, or **to ride 20 miles to one,** to y^e Discourageme^{nt} of Chriatian Religion amongst you. [end of page 3]. There are several Persons in the Province whose Estates both in Land and Negroes may become escheated for want of Heirs, and those Persons being childlefs, might they Enjoy the Honour of being Patrons, as well as being Founders of Churches, would **some of them I am persuaded, build Churches whilst they Live & Bequeath Their Estates to the Endowme^{nt} therefore when they dy [die] rather than let their fortunes escheat to a Popish Proprietor.**

There are also Several Gentlemen in the Province who having vast Tracts of Land, notwithstanding that have children, wo[u]ld be forward to Separate a Part of it for the Maintenance of a Minister to Officiate in Holy things, might they present a child, one of their own Family to the Church by them both Built, and edow'd. Now it is to be Hoped that **under a Queen so well Devoted to our Constitution as we now Enjoy,** a B^p may be appointed in some Part of the Continent to Ordain the Natives that shall be fir for that Holy Function.

And when you shall find your own Sons or Sons in law, your Brothers, Cosins or near relations in the Churches, then it is that I expect you will freely give that Encourage[men]t to those who Minister at the Altar, whi^{ch} now comes but grudgingly from you

whilst only Aliens & Strangers can pofsefs the Advantage of your Settlements. But then especially a **wealthy Planter** may think it no Prejuduce to his Family, tho he should with Considerable Cost both Build & Endow a church on some of his many Tracts of Land, when he shall find it in his Power to Provide by that very thing in an Honorable profefsion for the Hopefulest Branch of his Family.

Thus I have freely laid before you my thoughts with relation to Perfecting the State & Condition of your Church by [making a] *{inserted in original}* provision for some one to superintend over the Clergy, as well as by opening a way to give your selves more places for God's worship. And having no manner of Design In what I propose but barely the Chiefest Good I Submit wholly to you to Act therein as you please. And I shal be very easy my self whether yo do anything, or nothing in it. I only take leave to propose it to you to **lay this matter before Mr. Speaker Smithson** when you shal next see him. I take that Gentleman to be not only a Person of great abilities, & sound judgment, but thoroughly well affected to our Church, as having been a great Patron of its cause in y^e many struggles relating to its Establishment. Pray advise with him in this Matter, giving Him my most Humble Serve and great respects. **And believe Me ever to be as to your self one that truly loves and honours you and who is with all Sincerity**

Dear S^r

Your most afsured Friend &
Faithful Servant

Thomas Bray

Major William Dent (1660-1705)

William Dent was born about 1660 in St, Mary's County. In addition to the land he received from his father, William Dent was granted 70 acres of land on May 8, 1681, near the head of Nanjemoy Creek, known as "Baltimore's Gift" and in 1694 patented "Friendship," a tract of 1,571 acres in the Piscataway District of Prince George's County.

William Dent was a man of much influence and wealth in the colony of Maryland and continuously served in several public offices as well as an officer in the military. His achievements were quite impressive for his short life of only 45 years. One of his primary interests was in free public education, and in 1694 he contributed 2,000 pounds of tobacco for the building of free public schools in the Province. In addition, he

served as one of the trustees for King William's College, later known as St. John's College, Annapolis.

William Dent was married on February 8, 1684 to Elizabeth, daughter of Anne (Thorowgood) Chandler-Fowke and the deceased Colonel Gerard Fowke of Virginia and Maryland. William and Elizabeth Dent had 9 children:

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| 1. Thomas Dent | 6. Anne Dent |
| 2. William Dent | 7. Peter Dent |
| 3. Gerard Dent | 8. Philip Dent |
| 4. Elizabeth Dent | 9. Elizabeth Dent |
| 5. George Dent | |

William Dent died early in the year 1705. Upon his death the Friendship House property went to his son Thomas and then Thomas' son, William. In 1816 the estate left the Dent family and it had a succession of owners through the years.

Dent's Inventory (a continuation)

In the Store	
7 Swords att 3/6	6 reaping hooks at 2
6 hand Sawes at 12	a Sythe and furniture
2 files 1/2p Stilliards at 10/p	3 Coopers heading knives at 10
28 broad hoes at 14	1 doz 1/2 pairing chisells at 8/p doz
7 Grubbing axes at 14	2 mile picks a Spindle
6 Grubbing hoes at 14	2 Cottrells, 1 hold fast
6 Coopers Ads ^s at 20	7 Cros Cutt saw rests at 4
17 falling axes at 14	2 Small augers at 11
6 Coopers newells at 10	18 brest plates at 12
2 Carpenter ads ^s at 2/2	16 mortoising chessells at 6/p doz.
1 p ^s whale bone	10 Small staples at 1
5 p tow Cards at 3	7 large D ^o at 2
a tin Cullender	4 pick forks at 6/.
1 p mens falls	1 muck fork 10
8 Leather halters at 20	2 Large spitts at 2/
1 Sett horse harness	
6 bread graters at 3	
a basting Ladle	

(to be continued in future issues)

Mark you Calendar:
Winter Meeting
Saturday, January 16, 1993
La Plata Methodist Church Hall
2:00 p.m.